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Forty-eighth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Letter dated 14 July 1993 from the representatives of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to address you, upon the instructions of our Governments, which are parties to one of the Hague Conventions for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, of 1899 and 1907, or to both, to request, in accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "Observer status for the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the General Assembly".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum concerning the request for inclusion in the provisional agenda of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the question of observer status for the Permanent Court of Arbitration is annexed to the present letter.

(Signed) Richard BUTLER
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Australia to the United Nations

(Signed) Gerhard JANDL
Representative of Austria to the United
Nations

(Signed) Alexis BROUHNS
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent
Mission of Belgium to the United Nations

(Signed) Louise FRECHETTE
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Canada to the United Nations

(Signed) Luis F. JARAMILLO
Permanent Representative of Colombia to
the United Nations

(Signed) Bent HAAKONSEN
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Denmark to the United Nations

(Signed) Nabil ELARABY
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Eygpt to the United Nations

(Signed) Manasa K. SENILOLI
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Fiji to the United Nations

(Signed) W. BREITENSTEIN
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Finland to the United Nations

(Signed) Jean-Bernard MERIMEE
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of France to the United Nations

(Signed) Detlev GRAF ZU RANTZAU
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Germany to the United Nations

(Signed) Antonios EXARCHOS
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Greece to the United Nations

(Signed) Juan José CUEVA MEMBREÑO
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Honduras to the United Nations

(Signed) Gad YAACOBI
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Israel to the United Nations

(Signed) Francesco Paolo FULCI
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Italy to the United Nations

(Signed) Khalil MAKKAWI
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Lebanon to the United Nations

(Signed) Jean-Louis WOLZFELD
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Luxembourg to the United Nations

(Signed) S. PEERTHUM
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Mauritius to the United Nations

(Signed) N. H. BIEGMAN
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the Netherlands to the United Nations

(Signed) Martin HUSLID
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(Signed) Fernando GUILLÉN
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(Signed) Zbigniew M. WLOSOWICZ
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Poland to the United Nations

(Signed) Yuli M. VORONTSOV
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
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Nations

(Signed) Antonio PEDAUYE
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(Signed) H. M. G. S. PALIHAKKARA
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent
Mission of Sri Lanka to the United
Nations

(Signed) Ewald W. LIMON
Representative of Suriname to the United
Nations

(Signed) Timothy L. L. DLAMINI
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Swaziland to the United Nations

(Signed) Peter OSVALD
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Sweden to the United Nations

(Signed) Nitya PIBULSONGGRAM
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Thailand to the United Nations

(Signed) Inal BATU
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Turkey to the United Nations

(Signed) Victor H. BATIOUK
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Ukraine to the United Nations

(Signed) Thomas L. RICHARDSON
Ambassador and Chargé d'affaires a.i. of
the Permanent Mission of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland to the United Nations

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

The Permanent Court of Arbitration, an intergovernmental institution since 1899

The Permanent Court of Arbitration, which was established in 1899 by the first Hague Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and has its seat in the Peace Palace in The Hague, is the oldest intergovernmental institution in existence that is dedicated to the task of resolving disputes between States. Article 1 of the 1899 Convention (as well as article 1 of the 1907 Convention) reads:

> "With a view to obviating as far as possible recourse to force in the relations between States, the Signatory Powers agree to use their best efforts to insure the pacific settlement of international differences."

Besides arbitration, which is the settlement mechanism most referred to, the Court also offers a broad range of international dispute settlement services including good offices, mediation, commissions of inquiry and conciliation. the shared objective of maintaining international peace.

Article 4 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice stipulates that members of this Court are elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council from a list of candidates nominated by the national groups of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The Permanent Court of Arbitration is the only institution, other than the organs of the League of Nations and the United Nations, to be mentioned in the Charter by name.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration offers a unique fund of expertise and experience for four of the seven means of peaceful settlement of disputes listed in Article 33 of the Charter (inquiry, mediation, conciliation and arbitration). Therefore, the Court already plays an active role in implementing Article 33 of the Charter.

The Arbitration Rules prepared by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1976 (resolution 31/98) entrust the Secretary-General of the Permanent Court of Arbitration with the function of maintaining the integrity of the arbitral process: in particular, they authorize the Secretary-General to designate an "appointing authority" for the purpose of appointing members of arbitral tribunals, for example, upon failure of one of the parties to do so or in case the parties fail to reach an agreement on the composition of the tribunal.

When the General Assembly, in 1989, declared the period 1990-1999 "United Nations Decade of International Law", an important commemorative link was established between the United Nations and the Permanent Court of Arbitration, as the end of the Decade will coincide with the celebration by the Permanent Court of Arbitration of the completion of its first 100 years of service to the international community. Furthermore, one of the main purposes of the Decade is to further acceptance of and respect for international law and to promote means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States.

Adaptation of the Court to present requirements

The Permanent Court of Arbitration has recently taken a series of initiatives aimed at increasing awareness by States of the facilities and services offered by the International Bureau and at improving and modernizing the functioning of its system of disputes settlement.

One of these initiatives was the adoption by the Administrative Council on 20 October 1992 of new Optional Rules for Arbitrating Disputes between Two States. The aim of these new Rules - which are based on the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules - is to offer a modern set of Rules to States wishing to submit disputes to the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Moreover, the International Bureau of the Court is making great efforts, in cooperation with the depositary State of the Hague Conventions, to encourage States that are not yet parties to the Conventions to adhere to them.

The Court is actively participating in the programme of the Decade of International Law. It is organizing, for example, a conference of all its "Members", which is to take place in September 1993. The objectives of the conference will be to discuss the future of the Court and the preparation of a possible third Hague Convention for the pacific settlement of international disputes in 1999.

Conclusion

The States parties to the Hague Conventions for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes feel that the creation of a permanent institutional relation between the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the United Nations will enable both organizations to strengthen the existing links. It will enable the Permanent Court of Arbitration to:

- participate more actively in the programme of the Decade of International Law;

- supplement more effectively the functions of the International Court of Justice;

- intensify its cooperation with the United Nations in all appropriate fields.

Therefore, the States parties to the Hague Conventions consider that both the United Nations and the Permanent Court of Arbitration would benefit extensively from the granting of observer status to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in terms similar to those that have been prescribed for other intergovernmental organizations.

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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Letter dated 14 July 1993 from the representatives of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Mauritius, the Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Addendum

Add the following names to the list of signatories:

(Signed) Gaëtan R. OUEDRAOGO
Permanent Representative of
Burkina Faso to the United Nations

(Signed) Colin R. KEATING
Permanent Representative of
New Zealand to the United Nations

(Signed) Perezi K. KAMUNANWIRE
Permanent Representative of
Uganda to the United Nations

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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM OFFICES

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has the honour to request, pursuant to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the forty-eighth session of an item of an important character, entitled "United Nations interim offices". Owing to the nature of the item, the Secretary-General further requests that it be considered directly in plenary.

2. In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum concerning the request is annexed to this letter.

ANNEX

Explanatory Memorandum

1. It will be recalled that in 1992 the Secretary-General asked the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to establish United Nations interim offices in a number of countries of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. Since the Secretary-General decided to establish interim offices in certain countries, various aspects of this question have been examined in different committees and organs of the General Assembly. The Assembly, in its decision 47/469, referred to the need for a policy decision to be taken on this matter at its forty-eighth session.

3. Wishing to facilitate an integrated and comprehensive consideration of the matter by the General Assembly on the basis of a broad policy-oriented report which he has prepared, the Secretary-General accordingly requests the inclusion of an item entitled "United Nations interim offices" in the provisional agenda of the forty-eighth session of the Assembly.

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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM OFFICES

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in fulfilment of the Secretary-General's undertaking in document A/C.5/47/89 of 23 March 1993 to report to the General Assembly on the experience gained in the establishment and functioning of the seven United Nations interim offices, which have been set up in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. It will be recalled that in my first annual report on the work of the Organization, 1/ I expressed the intention to draw upon the experience of these interim offices in order to further the integrated approach, in the form of a unified United Nations presence at the country level, which I believe to be necessary in order to enhance the impact of the Organization and facilitate inter-agency coordination in response to countries' stated requirements and in support of national action by countries themselves.

2. This report is thus the "broad, policy-oriented report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session" referred to in paragraph 4 of the seventeenth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/47/7/Add.16 of 30 March 1993). It assesses experience gained so far and sets out my current views on the path to be followed in future.

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF SEVEN INTERIM OFFICES

3. The purpose of my decision in 1992 to establish United Nations interim offices in some countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and in Georgia, all of them countries in which the United Nations had not previously had field representation, was to ensure that the United Nations response to their special requirements was properly coordinated from the outset. Their

requirements included developmental assistance in transition, and all of them were new recipient countries. But they also wanted information about the manifold ways in which the United Nations could support their economic and social development and their adjustment to independence. For some of them, there was an immediate requirement for humanitarian assistance programmes. And some were involved in actual or potential conflicts in respect of which the Secretary-General had been mandated, or would soon be mandated, to play a peacemaking role. They thus provided an opportunity to devise a new model for United Nations representation at the country level in support of an integrated approach which would address, in a comprehensive way, the political, socio-economic, environmental and humanitarian dimensions of the situation in which each of these countries found itself. This approach was reported to the General Assembly in my note of 26 October 1992 (A/47/419/Add.3) and was fully consistent with the request subsequently addressed to me, in the development context, in operative paragraph 49 of Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992, in which I was requested to ensure that the operational activities for development within the United Nations system carried out in new recipient countries were undertaken, from the outset, on the basis of an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation and presence in the countries concerned.

4. In devising a new model for United Nations representation in these countries, it was not my intention to disturb or replace existing mechanisms for coordination. On the contrary, the intention was, and is, to build on what has already been achieved, extending it to encompass United Nations activities not yet covered by it, and thus to provide a more comprehensive and unified United Nations presence in the countries concerned.

5. The principal existing mechanism is that of the resident coordinator for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, provided for in General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977. In its resolution 47/199, the Assembly requested me to strengthen the resident coordinator system and specified a number of ways in which this should be done. In particular, the resident coordinator was entrusted with leadership in the provision of assistance by the United Nations system to countries that decided to formulate a country strategy note. One of the principles adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 had also provided that the resident coordinator should normally be responsible for coordinating the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system at the country level in complex emergencies requiring a coordinated response. (In its resolution 47/168 of 22 December 1992, the Assembly requested me to review the effectiveness and achievement of this arrangement, among others.)

6. Given the dominant position of development in most countries where the Organization undertakes operational activities and given the responsibilities assigned by the General Assembly to the resident coordinator in respect of both development and humanitarian assistance, I worked from the beginning on the assumption that in almost all cases the same person would serve as both United Nations representative and resident coordinator and that that person would normally be the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Where developmental or humanitarian activities were concerned, the relationship between the United Nations representative and the representative of the various United Nations programmes, funds and offices

working out of the interim office would thus, in almost all cases, be governed by the provisions of resolution 47/199 and other resolutions which define the responsibilities of the resident coordinator, including resolution 46/182 with respect to humanitarian assistance.

7. However - and this was the innovative aspect of the approach - the United Nations representative would also have coordination responsibilities in addition to those which he/she would exercise in his/her capacity as resident coordinator in the developmental and humanitarian fields. These additional responsibilities would include the coordination of humanitarian assistance activities in so far as they were not already within the purview of the resident coordinator in accordance with resolution 46/182. They would also include activities related to public information, human rights and support for the Secretary-General in cases where, with the consent of the Government concerned, the General Assembly or the Security Council had mandated him to undertake preventive diplomacy or peacemaking functions.

8. It was because of this overall coordination role of the United Nations representative that from the beginning I made it clear that if any United Nations programme, fund or office wished to establish a field presence in countries where a United Nations integrated office already existed, I would expect its representative to become part of that office. I also expressed the hope that the specialized agencies would choose to be represented in these offices. At the same time, I made clear that the additional coordination responsibilities of the United Nations representative, like those of the resident coordinator, were, in consonance with operative paragraph 38 (c) of resolution 47/199, without prejudice to the separate identities and, where appropriate, representation of the various United Nations bodies undertaking field activities in the country concerned.

9. These considerations, together with the conclusions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) at its first regular session in 1992 on the role of the United Nations in the CIS countries (see A/C.5/47/89, paras. 4-7), have guided my efforts to establish integrated United Nations offices in the seven countries already mentioned. My proposals in this sense were welcomed by the Governments concerned, and the necessary host country agreements were concluded. I entrusted the task of establishing these offices to UNDP and the Department of Public Information. Given the somewhat experimental nature of the exercise and the lack of provision in the regular budget for the 1992-1993 biennium for the United Nations share of the costs, I referred to these integrated offices as "interim offices". The first interim office opened in Belarus on 8 September 1992, and the rest quickly followed, culminating in the opening of the office in Uzbekistan on 1 February 1993. Four of the offices are currently headed by staff members of UNDP and three by staff members of the United Nations Secretariat.

10. Since their establishment, the interim offices have played an effective role in responding to the immediate needs of their host Governments, both in developmental activities and in supporting the transition through which the countries concerned are moving. They have made available quick impact and short-term advisory services in order to provide strategic advice on training in social and economic areas of critical importance for societies in transition. They have facilitated dialogue between national institutions in the recipient

countries and the relevant United Nations bodies in order to formulate and implement integrated technical cooperation programmes which concentrate on priority areas and address specific issues in which the United Nations has a comparative advantage.

11. The interim offices have also played a role in facilitating the Organization's humanitarian and emergency relief activities in the countries concerned. These include emergency assistance after severe floods in Kazakhstan and support for a senior delegation of United Nations officials which visited Ukraine and other countries affected by the Chernobyl disaster. The offices have also assisted in the preparation and coordination of humanitarian assistance programmes in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

12. The heads of the interim offices, in their capacity as United Nations representatives, have acted as direct channels of communication between senior personalities in the host Governments and various programmes, funds and offices of the United Nations when the host countries required information about the support available to them from the United Nations and when they needed to communicate with the Organization on a variety of matters arising from their independence. In those countries where the Secretary-General has been given a mandate to help resolve actual or potential conflicts, the interim offices have also been of great value as a channel of communication between the Secretary-General and the Governments concerned and as a source of information to be incorporated into reports requested of the Secretary-General by the Security Council.

13. In all these activities, the interim offices have succeeded in strengthening the image of the United Nations as an integrated system whose component parts are able to work together, in support of host Governments, in response to the special and urgent requirements of countries in transition. It is to the credit of the United Nations representatives and all those who have worked within the framework of the interim offices that these results have been achieved despite the inevitable start-up problems that were encountered in establishing a new form of United Nations representation in countries where the Organization had not previously been represented.

14. In March 1993, I decided to establish a task force, which would include representatives of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), as well as the relevant departments of the United Nations Secretariat. Its mandate was to work out solutions to certain immediate operational difficulties that had arisen and to advise me on the broader policy issues. The work of the task force has clarified the concept of a unified presence at the country level, on the basis of the ideas described in part II of this report.

III. THE PRESENT CONCEPT OF INTERIM OFFICES

15. The present concept, as it has evolved, can be summarized in the following way:

(a) The interim office provides a framework, if possible on common premises, within which the United Nations and its programmes, funds and offices (usually UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, but also the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) if they are active in the country concerned) carry out their mandated activities in the country concerned;

(b) The interim office is headed by a United Nations representative, who is appointed by the Secretary-General after consultation with the Heads of the programmes, funds and offices concerned;

(c) The legal status and the overall relationship of the office with the receiving State is governed by an agreement prepared and negotiated by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs;

(d) The United Nations representative normally (and, to date, invariably) is appointed also as resident coordinator of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system (following the normal inter-agency consultations) and performs the functions laid down by the General Assembly in resolution 47/199 and other resolutions that define the responsibilities of the resident coordinator;

(e) Where developmental or humanitarian activities are concerned, the relationship between the United Nations representative (assuming that he/she is also resident coordinator) and the representatives of the various United Nations programmes, funds and offices working out of the interim office is governed by the provisions of resolution 47/199 and other relevant resolutions, including resolution 46/182 with respect to humanitarian assistance;

(f) In respect of all other activities, the representatives of the various United Nations programmes, funds and offices working out of the interim office keep the United Nations representative fully informed about their activities so that he/she can exercise the necessary coordinating function;

(g) If difficulties arise within the office that the United Nations representative is unable to resolve locally, he/she refers them to the headquarters of the United Nations programmes, funds and offices concerned, so that a solution acceptable to all can be found;

(h) Subject to paragraphs 15 (c), (e) and (f) above, each United Nations programme, fund or office represented in the interim office, reports directly to, and receives instructions directly from, its head office and negotiates and agrees on its activities directly with the Government, in accordance with its mandate;

(i) For the latter purpose, the agreement referred to in paragraph 15 (c) above includes provision for each United Nations agency, programme, fund or office to conclude with the host Government a supplementary agreement concerning the conditions for cooperation and assistance in agreed projects within its mandate;

(j) Administration of the offices is entrusted to UNDP. Experience gained through mechanisms of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies and duty stations

where common premises/services are already operational is the basis for defining commonalities and establishing cost-sharing arrangements by mutual agreement between the United Nations, its programmes, funds and offices.

IV. FUTURE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT

16. There are four broad sets of reasons why I believe it important to make further progress in establishing a more unified United Nations presence at the country level.

17. The first set of reasons derives from my conviction that the principal duty of the United Nations is to devise and apply an integrated approach to human security in all its aspects, in which each functional element of the world Organization plays its own indispensable role in a coordinated, common endeavour of the Organization as a whole. This vision requires coordination, not only between the headquarters of United Nations bodies, but also between their representatives at the country level. As stated above, mechanisms exist for such coordination. My purpose is to build on what has already been achieved in order to enhance further the effectiveness of the efforts of the Organization in all their diversity.

18. Secondly, it is necessary to facilitate access to the United Nations system for Member States who wish to seek its assistance in various areas of activity. This need exists especially in the case of newly independent States and other States in transition, which can find themselves faced with unexpected new challenges and may require advice on how the system as a whole can help them. The designation of a single official as United Nations representative, heading a United Nations office which provides a framework for all United Nations activities in the country concerned, is an effective way of meeting this requirement, without prejudice to the establishment of direct contacts between the Government and the representatives of the United Nations programmes, funds and offices, which it judges best able to provide the services it needs.

19. Thirdly, there is the need, at the country level as elsewhere, to rationalize the work of the Organization, to avoid duplication and to achieve economies of scale. As regards common premises, this need has been recognized since 1989, when, in its resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989, the General Assembly requested all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to make, without delay, the necessary arrangements, in cooperation with host Governments and without additional cost to developing countries, to establish common premises at the country level. The establishment of a unified United Nations presence in the field in an integrated office is a further means of improving cost-effectiveness and enhancing the cohesion of the Organization's common endeavours.

20. Fourthly, it is necessary to improve the image of the United Nations system as an Organization which is able to work harmoniously and in a properly coordinated way to provide its Member States with the services they need. In spite of existing mechanisms for coordination, the United Nations presence at the country level is often perceived as falling short of this objective. Those perceptions must be corrected; the establishment of a unified presence at the country level is a means of doing so. In some countries a step in this

direction has already been taken by integrating United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices, as described in my report of 10 March 1993 (A/AC.198/1993/7).

21. Although none of the interim offices has yet been in existence for a year, I am encouraged to believe that this approach can be an effective way of responding to the above requirements. I have accordingly decided, at the request of the Government concerned, to apply this unified approach to United Nations representation in the Russian Federation. The necessary host country agreement has been concluded with the Government of the Russian Federation and action is in hand for the early opening of the integrated office in Moscow. The Government of Eritrea has welcomed my proposal that the United Nations premises at Asmara should be unified in an integrated office, and the host country agreement is currently under negotiation. It would be my intention to establish other such offices in cases where, having consulted the other United Nations bodies concerned, I feel that this would be advantageous and where the host Government agrees.

22. ACC has welcomed my decision to work for a more unified United Nations presence in the field. The representatives of specialized agencies do not yet form part of any of the interim offices, though one of them has indicated that it may wish to be associated with the integrated office to be established at Asmara. But those of them that are engaged in operational activities for development already fall within the resident coordinator system. For that reason, and guided by the arguments in paragraphs 16 to 20 above in favour of a unified presence at the country level, I have from the outset expressed the hope that the specialized agencies would choose to be represented in the new offices, and I have directed that the initial arrangements should be designed in such a way as to facilitate their future presence.

23. I have also given thought to the modalities for the selection of United Nations representatives. In this connection, I have been guided, to the largest extent possible, by the provisions of resolution 47/199, in which I was requested to strengthen the resident coordinator system, inter alia, by widening the pool of qualified development professionals eligible for appointment as UNDP resident representatives/resident coordinators to include the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, together with increased transparency in the selection process. Clearly, the officials to be entrusted with the position of United Nations representative should be those whose presence as representatives of their organizations in the country concerned is required anyway to carry out the different activities mandated by the United Nations. In other words, they should not constitute "an additional bureaucratic layer". Therefore, in making selections for these positions I intend to draw primarily from these representatives.

V. CONCLUSION

24. This report has described my efforts during the last 18 months to establish in certain countries a unified presence of the United Nations in support of an integrated approach to the provision of the services which those countries require from the Organization. Experience during this period has made it possible to formulate for these countries an approach to United Nations

representation at the country level which achieves that objective and which has been welcomed by the Governments concerned. As indicated above, the existing interim offices already have important achievements to their credit. They have permitted a well-coordinated United Nations response to the new recipient countries' needs for various kinds of support from the United Nations. I accordingly propose that the seven existing interim offices, together with those which are being established at Asmara and in Moscow, be confirmed in existence by the General Assembly, at which point it would be my intention to change the title of those offices to "United Nations integrated offices". Proposals for financing the offices beyond the end of the current year are contained in the programme budget which I am submitting for the 1994-1995 biennium.

25. For the future, I believe that the approach that is evolving in the seven countries where interim offices were established during 1992-1993 should be kept in mind for application in other countries where similar requirements may occur in future. It remains my intention to continue to build on existing coordination mechanisms to develop a more unified United Nations presence at the country level and I shall keep this matter under regular review.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/47/1), para. 29.

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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

EFFECTIVE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH AUTONOMY

Letter dated 16 July 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion of an item entitled "Effective realization of the right of self-determination through autonomy" in the provisional agenda of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

For your information and in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure, I am enclosing an explanatory memorandum in support of this request. In view of the potential value of a comprehensive discussion of this matter in a wider forum at an appropriate level, I respectfully request that the item be considered in plenary.

(Signed) Claudia FRITSCHE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

The Principality of Liechtenstein proposes that an item entitled "Effective realization of the right of self-determination through autonomy" be included in the agenda of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Liechtenstein became a Member of the United Nations in 1990. At the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, held in 1991, the Head of State of Liechtenstein, His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, addressed the Assembly during the general debate. He drew attention to the need to address the problems which arise for the international community where peaceful coexistence between different groups within States seems impossible to achieve or maintain. He suggested that, rather than risking cruel and destructive civil wars, solutions might be found within the broad framework of the principle of self-determination. He envisaged that, rather than waiting to deal with specific cases once they had already arisen and much emotion had already been generated, it would be better to seek in advance some guiding principles which, within the framework of self-determination, would foresee a careful evolution from simpler to more advanced levels of autonomy for communities for which such a progression was appropriate. He noted the possibility of there eventually being an international instrument to give effect to these ideas.

These ideas have been elaborated further in subsequent statements on behalf of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the General Assembly and its Committees, during the forty-seventh session of the Assembly, in 1992.

In the course of those contributions to the deliberations of the Assembly, the Government of Liechtenstein announced that it was willing to convene a meeting of experts to consider further the main ideas put forward by Liechtenstein. An invitation to nominate independent experts was subsequently extended to all Members of the United Nations, as well as to States with observer status and to international organizations and institutions. The Meeting of Experts was held in Liechtenstein from 16 to 18 March 1993; it was attended by 46 participants.

In the light of the discussions which took place during that Meeting, and on further reflection, the Government of Liechtenstein is more than ever convinced of the potential value of these matters being considered in the wider forum of the General Assembly. Internal conflicts within States, while by no means always the result of differences between distinctive communities, often have their origin in such differences, and in particular in the denial to communities of the opportunity for appropriate self-expression. Furthermore, internal conflicts are increasingly more destructive, not only for those directly involved but also for neighbouring States and for the international community. Recent experience suggests, on the one hand, that where States in which there are distinctive communities do not give those communities appropriate means of self-expression this can result in violations of human rights and even in conflict, and, on the other hand, that where adequate self-expression is granted by the States concerned to such communities the risk

of strife, with accompanying serious international implications, is greatly reduced.

At the same time, the Government of Liechtenstein believes that the principle of self-determination, which the United Nations, and the General Assembly in particular, has done so much to promote, still holds unexplored potential, which may prove of great value in helping to resolve - or better, to avoid - the serious problems which can arise from distinctive communities not having adequate means of self-expression.

Self-determination does not allow only for independence. It also encompasses other forms of political development, which may be better suited to the needs of particular communities. One of these other forms is autonomy, which is a flexible concept through which to reflect appropriate degrees of self-expression for communities in different places and at different times. It is this which the Government of Liechtenstein believes deserves particular consideration by the General Assembly, as a possible basis on which to build in the search for ways in which the international community might do something to avoid the increasingly terrible situations which, unhappily, so often arise.

The Government of Liechtenstein does not underestimate the difficulties, both political and technical, which may lie in the way of securing agreement on particular proposals in this area. The Government of Liechtenstein does, however, strongly believe that the international community, as represented in the General Assembly, should not turn away from any attempt to produce progress in these important matters, which are becoming of increasing urgency in today's world.

The Government of Liechtenstein accordingly believes that the inclusion in the agenda of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "Effective realization of the right of self-determination through autonomy" would be appropriate in order to enable the relevant ideas to be explored further.